FBIS DAILY REPORT

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REPRESENTATIVE FINDLEY SAYS 'ARAFAT PREPARED FOR CONCESSIONS

JN1310017 Amman JURDAN TIMES in English 15 Jan 78 pp 1, 2 JN

[By Rami G. Khuri]

[Excerpts] Amman, Jan. 12--An American congressman who met for three hours with Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasir 'Arafat in Damascus last week says he feels that Mr. 'Arafat concedes that any Palestinian state established on the West Bank and Gaza may have less-than-total independence in the first years of its existence.

Representative Paul Findley (Republican, Illinois) told the JORDAN TIMES in an interview here last night that he draws this conclusion from Mr. 'Arafat's suggestion to him that the Palestinians would welcome a peace-keeping and security force in a Palestinian state, if that force were composed of troops of the five veto-wielding permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (The United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, and the People's Republic of China).

Rep. Findley said Mr. 'Arafat called the peace-keeping suggestion "the skeleton of an idea" about how a Palestinian state could have internationally acceptable security arrangements. He said Mr. 'Arafat "welcomed the idea of a peace-keeping force for a stated period of time, and he chose those five countries to provide the peace-keeping forces because they could be commanded by the secretary general of the United Nations."

Rep. Findley asked Mr. 'Arafat if the U.N. peace-keeping force could remain in Palestine for ten years or more, to which the PLO leader replied that such details could be considered if the idea were first accepted in principle.

Mr. 'Arafat was then asked whether he would accept excluding American and Soviet troops from such a force, to allay Western fears of indue Soviet presence or influence in a Palestinian state, and Mr. 'Arafat again said that any such suggestions would be considered if the basic idea were accepted.

"He did not reject these suggestions," Rep. Findley said, "which indicates to me that he is agreement to very substantial limitations on the independence of any new Palestinian state. Mr. 'Arafat said he welcomed such a United Nations-supervised peace-keeping force, and I think that by doing so he concedes that in the short term a Palestinian state will have less-than-total independence."

Rep. Findley said Mr. 'Arafat suggested it would take 10-15 years to establish "the skeleton of a government system in a Palestinian state," and added that Mr. 'Arafat said he "could not see the day when the new Palestinian state would have such military power that it would constitute a treat to, or cause concern on the part of, any of its neighbours."

"His whole objective is obviously peaceful," Rep. Findley said of Mr. 'Arafat, whom he had met for the first time. "He came through as a moderate, as one who would make concessions and who would be part of the peace process that is now underway, in Geneva or elsewhere."

On the purely personal level, Rep. Findley said he found Mr. 'Arafat "thoughtful, courteous, outgoing and easy to converse with."

Rep. Findley continued: "'Arafat was very moderate in tone. For example, he did not have a single harsh word for As-Sadat. He called him 'my friend of many years' and 'a man I respect,' though he though As-Sadat was on the wrong course at present."

Rep. Findley and three other congressmen met with Mr. 'Arafat in Damascus, in a meeting initiated by Rep. Findley before leaving the U.S. several weeks ago. The other three members of the American congressional delegation now in Amman who met the PLO leader preferred to remain anonymous, given the delicacy of American domestic politics and the three's wish not to have their meeting with Mr. 'Arafat used against them politically within the United States.

"'Arafat is held in such ill-repute in the American Congress and nation," Rep. Findley said, "that some people would not want it known that they met with him."

Also in the meeting with Mr. 'Arafat was PLO Political Department director Faruq Qaddumi and Mr. Basil 'Aql, a personal political advisor to Mr. 'Arafat.

The suggestion of keeping American and Soviet troops out of the proposed peace-keeping force "should allay Israeli and others' fears of the Soviets' moving into the area during a transition period for any new Palestinian state," Rep. Findley said

He asked Mr. 'Arafat whether a Palestinian state would want normal diplomatic relations with the United States, and the PLO leader replied with a rather emphatic yes.

At the end of the three-hour meeting, Mr. 'Arafat dictated a personal message to President Carter, which Rep. Findley will carry and deliver next week, upon his return to Washington.

"The message is of a warm and conciliatory nature," Rep. Findley said, declining to offer any information on whether it was a message of substance or simply of personal and diplomatic niceties.

Rep. Findley also said he asked Mr. 'Arafat if he would consider travelling to Washington to meet with American legislative or executive leaders, perhaps even with President Carter or the head of his National Security Council, Mr. Zbigniew Brzezinski. Mr. 'Arafat replied affirmatively, and Rep. Findley now says he will try to set up such a meeting with American political leaders.

"I think 'Arafat and the Palestinians are making one or two steps of a positive nature, in agreeing to less than full independence in any future state, and if Israeli Prime Minister Begin also moves in the same manner, then I think we can have a meeting of previously irreconcilable positions," Rep. Findley said.

PLO RALLY IN DAMASCUS MARKS REVOLUTION'S ANNIVERSARY

JN130728Y Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 13 Jan 78 JN

[Excerpt] Damascus--The PLO held a mammoth popular rally in the trade union hall last night on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of the Palestinian revolution.

The rally was attended by Khalid al-Fahum, chairman of the Palestine National Council; Comrade 'Ismat al-Qadi, regional secretary of the unified Palestinian organization in the Ba'th Party; Comrade Hasan 'Ayyash, assistant regional secretary of the unified Palestinian organization; Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmad, Ba'th Party Regional Command member; Comrade Mahmud Hadid, Ba'th Party Regional Command member; 'Abd al-Ghani Qannut, member of the central command of the nationalist progressive front; members of the regional command of the unified Palestinian organization; PLO Central Committee members; commanders of the resistance factions; heads of the Palestinian popular organizations; members of Arab and foreign diplomatic missions, and a large number of Palestinian masses.

'Abd al-Muhsin Abu Mayzar, PLO official spokesman, delivered a speech on the occasion in which he praised the revolutionary sacrifices of the Palestinian people. He pointed out that the Palestinian revolution is an extension of several Arab revolutions that have erupted throughout the great Arab homeland.

Abu Mayzar praised Syria's stand toward the Palestinian cause. He said that in the past Syria had confronted all plots hatched against the Palestinian cause. Syria, under struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, is now leading a major front to confront the plots of those plotting against the Palestinian cause.

Abu Mayzar denounced As-Sadat's capitulationist policy. He said: We are neither against Egypt nor against its people and armed forces. We are against the policy being pursued by the Egyptian ruler, who is willing to give up things he does not possess to those who do not deserve them. Abu Mayzar added: As-Sadat has thus relinquished the rights of Egypt and of the Palestinian people as well as the unity of the Arab cause.

In conclusion Abu Mayzar praised the Soviet Union's stand in support of the Palestinian cause.

Speaking on behalf of the nationalist progressive front, 'Abd al-Ghani Qannut, member of the front's central command, praised the Palestinian revolution and its struggle during the past 13 years. He also spoke about Syria's stand toward the Palestinian cause and the fact that Syria has been harboring the revolution since the very beginning. He said that it is nothing new to see the Syrian people supporting the Palestinian people. This, he added, is dictated by national cohesion in the common historic battle.

ICATU DELEGATION RETURNS FROM MOSCOW, PRAGUE

JN120835Y Baghdad INA in Arabic 0750 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] Baghdad, 12 January--The delegation of the General Secretariat of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions [ICATU] led by Sulayman 'Ali, ICATU assistant secretary general, returned to Baghdad last night following a 4-day visit to Moscow and Prague.

The delegation had talks with the World Federation of Trade Unions and the Soviet All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions on the Arab situation following As-Sadat's visit to occupied Jerusalem, its consequences and ICATU's measures to confront these consequences.

It is recalled that joint statements were issued at the end of the talks reiterating the rejection of any solution not serving the issue of the Palestinian people's struggle.

KUWAIT

YAR FOREIGN MINISTER AL-ASNAJ ARRIVES 12 JANUARY

LD121758Y Kuwait Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Jan 78 LD

[Text] YAR Foreign Minister 'Abdallah al-Asnaj arrived in Kuwait this evening. He was met at the airport by Foreign Under Secretary Rashid 'Abd al-'Aziz ar-Rashid, a representative of the protocol department at the ministry and the YAR ambassador in Kuwait.

AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM SUSPENDED FOR VIOLATING PUBLICATIONS LAW

NC121957Y Cairo MENA in Arabic 1942 GMT 12 Jan 78 NC

[Text] Kuwait, 12 January--Kuwaiti acting Prime Minister and Information Minister Shaykh Jabir al-'Ali today issued a decision suspending the newspaper AR-RA'Y AL-'AMM for 1 week effective tomorrow, Friday, for violating the publications law.

The paper had published an article which spoke of the need to form a new cabinet, although the Information Ministry had asked the paper not to go into this subject.

OMAN

DJIBOUTI PRESIDENT CONTINUES TALKS WITH QABUS

LD121827Y Djibouti Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Jan 78 LD/EA

[Summary] President Hassan Gouled is continuing his visit to Oman where he has held talks with Sultan Qabus on bilateral relations and the Horn of Africa. President Hassan Gouled is now in Salalah.

YEMEN--YAR

AL-GHASHMI RECEIVES FOREIGN MINISTER, SENDS HIM TO KUWAIT

JN121840Y San'a' Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] Lt Col Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi, Command Council chairman and commander in chief of the armed forces, received in his office at the Republican Palace this morning the foreign minister, who presented a detailed report on his visits to Bahrain and Qatar. He also conveyed to brother Al-Ghashmi the greetings of Shaykh 'Isa ibn Salman Al Khalifah, amir of Bahrain, and Shaykh Khalifah ibn Hamad Al Thani, amir of Qatar.

The meeting was attended by the Command Council member and prime minister and the deputy primeminister for foreign and economic affairs and finance minister.

Meanwhile, brother Al-Ghashmi has entrusted the foreign minister to travel to Kuwait this evening and deliver a written message to Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad as-Sabah, the amir of Kuwait, and contact his Kuwaiti counterpart within the framework of the intensive contacts aimed at Arab solidarity in the current stage through which the Arab nation is passing.

Al-Asnaj on Visits

JN121828Y San'a' Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] In a statement made to the SABA' NEWS AGENCY correspondent following his return from visits to Qatar and Bahrain, the foreign minister said: Consultations held with our brothers in Qatar and Bahrain were within the framework of moves undertaken by the YAR and other brothers in the peninsula and Arab Gulf. The consultations are aimed at serious work to achieve Arab solidarity in light of the resolutions of the summit conferences in Rabat and Algiers.

The foreign minister added: I delivered two written messages from brother Lt Col Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi to the amir of Qatar and the amir of Bahrain. In addition, bilateral relations between the YAR and both Qatar and Bahrain--which are becoming stronger--were discussed.

The minister added that he has discerned full understanding and enthusiasm in this respect, and it has been decided to undertake a unanimous initiative aimed at reviving the spirit of Arab solidarity, stopping the current deterioration in Arab relations and drawing up an integral Arab strategy by means of which we restore unity to the Arab ranks and face outside challenges, the foremost of which is Zionist aggression.

PRIME MINISTER RECEIVES U.S., SOMALI AMBASSADORS

JN121830Y San'a' Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] Brother 'Abd al-'Aziz 'Abd al-Ghani, Command Council member and prime minister, today received their excellencies the ambassadors of the United States and the Somali Democratic Republic in San'a' and held separate talks with them on their countries' relations with the YAR.

AL-GHASHMI PRESENTS MEDAL TO OUTGOING SYRIAN AMBASSADOR

JN101931Y San'a' Domestic Service in Arabic 1700 GMT 10 Jan 78 JN

[Excerpts] Lt Col Ahmad Husayn al-Ghashmi, Command Council chairman and commander in chief of the armed forces, received at 1000 today His Excellency Muhammad 'Adnan az-Zir, Syrian ambassador in San'a', on the occasion of the latter's conclusion of his term of office in the YAR. At the end of the meeting brother Al-Ghashmi awarded his excellency the ambassador the Ma'rib Medal, Third Class.

Brother Al-Ghashmi said: I present you with this medal in appreciation of your efforts in the YAR to promote relations between the two fraternal countries as well as for everything Syria has offered us in support throughout our struggle, above all, the Syrian stand during the difficult 70 days. Al-Ghashmi added: I ask you to convey my greetings and best wishes to His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad and the fraternal Syrian people.

BRIEFS

NEW OFFICIAL IN ADEN--President Salim Rubayyi' 'Ali today appointed Muhammad Awad Ba'mir under secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture. [Aden Domestic Service in Arabic 1230 GMT 4 Jan 78 LD/EA]

MATERIALS RELATED TO MILITARY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Al-Jamasi, Weizman Press Conference

NC121630Y Cairo Domestic Service in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Jan 78 NC

[Text] The deputy prime minister and war minister and head of the Egyptian side to the Egyptian-Israeli Military Committee, Gen Muhammad 'Abd al-Ghani al-Jamasi, and the Israeli defense minister and head of the Israeli side to the Military Committee, 'Ezer Weizman held a joint press conference at At-Tahirah Palace this afternoon. The conference was attended by the members of both the Egyptian and Israeli sides to the Military Committee.

General al-Jamasi began the press conference by saying: We began our discussions yesterday and we resumed them today in order to discuss the military and security subjects that are of interest to both Egypt and Israel. The committee's discussions are continuing.

Replying to a question on the Middle East problem, Gen 'Ezer Weizman said: General al-Jamasi and I discussed for 24 hours the mutual security issues facing Egypt and Israel, and not Israel alone. I believe that, with frankness and sincerity, we can find the way to satisfactory solutions. However, there are problems and we cannot say that everything that is before us is easy.

Asked if there is a large gap between the Egyptian and Israeli sides on the issue of the Israeli settlements in Sinai, General al-Jamasi said that he sees that newsmen are strongly concentrating on the question of the settlements in Sinai. He added: We discussed this subject yesterday and today. We shall continue to discuss it until we find ways to achieve the objective we are seeking. However, we cannot say that there is a gap between the two sides. With determination and persistence we will achieve results.

Commenting on this, Weizman said that he was very pleased to hear these words from General al-Jamasi.

Asked if Sinai is the principal subject of the discussions, General al-Jamasi replied: It is natural for Sinai to be the principal subject of the discussions. Asked if he could explain the Israeli security requirements after they were raised by the Israeli chief of staff at today's session, General al-Jamasi said: Lt Gen Muhammad 'Ali Fahmi debated these subjects from a military standpoint. We exchanged views on this subject. It is difficult for me to mention the Egyptian and Israeli security subjects to newsmen.

Asked if the Egyptian side is prepared to discuss security problems from a general viewpoint that would include Jordan, Syria and Lebanon and if what has been discussed have been issues as seen from Egypt's viewpoint alone, General al-Jamasi said: The Egyptian-Israeli Military Committee is part of the Cairo conference, which is dealing with the question of comprehensive solution to the Middle East issue. He added: The Military Committee is also concerned with considering those military subjects having a bearing on a comprehensive solution. We have concentrated our efforts on discussing the military subjects involving Egypt and Israel alone, until a final decision is made at the Jerusalem conference on 16 January with regard to the Palestinian problem. Afterward, we will discuss the military subjects in accordance with the political decision that will be made.

Asked if Egypt is demanding the return of the Egyptian armed forces to all of Sinai following the signing of a Sinai agreement, General al-Jamasi said: When we reach a peace agreement, we will define the demilitarized zones in accordance with Resolution 242 and in accordance with the missions of the armed forces. After the peace agreement, we will define the size of the forces that will be required to be present in Sinai.

Asked if there is a possibility for total Israeli withdrawal from the Israeli settlements in Sinai and if there is to be an exchange of territories between the two countries, General al-Jamasi said: You mean a change in some border areas? I hope that we will not be in a hurry for results because the subjects are numerous and intertwined. I believe that you think that in 2 days we can solve problems that have existed for many years. However, I hope that you will not be in a hurry for results.

Asked about compensation for the Sinai oil, General al-Jamasi said that it is too early to ask about this subject. Asked if there are international borders to be agreed upon, General al-Jamasi said: The Egyptian borders with Palestine are international borders, and they are clearly defined and known, incontestable and indisputable.

With regard to these international borders, General al-Jamasi was asked if Egypt would accept an exchange of territories in the future, should the Israelis make such proposals, for example, between Rafah and the Negev Desert. General al-Jamasi replied: Let us leave this for the negotiations. This subject has not been raised so far. I gave a reply on Egypt's international borders in the answer to the previous question, in which I noticed a certain insinuation.

Asked about Weizman's statement on waterways, General al-Jamasi said that he meant innocent passage in the Strait of Tiran. This subject was not discussed by the Military Committee because it is a subject for the Political Committee in Jerusalem.

Asked about Egypt's position on Israeli airports in Sinai, General al-Jamasi said: We debated this subject and we will continue to debate it. We have not reached a decision on it so far.

At the end of the press conference, General al-Jamasi addressed the newsmen by saying: I would like to clarify one thing to you. You are exerting pressure on us in an unusual way. We are not expected to solve all the problems and reach specific results in 2 days. If we take into consideration that the debates on security, defense and military questions of the two sides take a long time, this should be a reason for you not to be in a hurry for results. On behalf of General Weizman and myself, I say that we will announce all the specific results we reach immediately.

The second session of the Egyptian-Israeli Military Committee ended this morning. The Israeli delegation will probably return to Israel tomorrow to submit what has been discussed to Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin and senior Israeli officials.

MENA Report on Press Conference

NC121451Y Cairo MENA in Arabic 1334 GMT 12 Jan 78 NC

[Excerpts] Cairo, 12 January--Gen Muhammad al-Jamasi, deputy prime minister and minister of war and war production, has stated that Egypt's international borders are recognized and clearly defined, incontestable and not subject to discussion or negotiation. He affirmed that the Egyptian-Israeli Military Committee is part of the Cairo Conference, which aims at a comprehensive solution of the Middle East issue, and that the Military Committee is concerned with considering the military questions pertaining to the comprehensive solution.

At a joint press conference with Israeli Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman, General al-Jamasi said: The military talks of the Egyptian-Israeli Military Committee began yesterday. We met today to discuss military and security issues on interest to Egypt and Israel. The discussions are continuing. We will resume our talks this evening.

General al-Jamasi said that he would speak in Arabic in order to be accurate in his answers to reporters' questions.

Regarding the positions of the Egyptian and Israeli sides on the question of the Israeli settlements and whether the two sides were far apart on this, General al-Jamasi said: I see that the newsmen are concentrating a lot on the question of the Israeli settlements in Sinai.

He added: This is one of the topics discussed yesterday and today. We will continue to discuss it until we find the means to fulfill the objective for both sides. We cannot say that the positions are far apart, in the real sense of the word, but with determination, resolve and constructive discussion we will achieve results.

The Israeli defense minister said he was happy to hear this answer from General al-Jamasi. He translated it into Hebrew for the benefit of the Israeli radio and television reporters attending the press conference.

Asked about his steps for promoting peace, the Israeli defense minister said: General al-Jamasi and I have been holding discussions for the past 24 hours. We discussed the problems of mutual security for Egypt and Israel. We were faced with some problems dealing with security and defense, since I am responsible for Israel's security and General al-Jamasi is responsible for Egypt's security. I believe that with complete frankness we can achieve satisfactory solutions. This morning we discussed all the specific problems, and I can affirm that every side is doing its best to surmount these problems.

General al-Jamasai was asked: After a peace agreement is signed between Egypt and Israel, would Egypt side with Syria should the latter launch an attack against Israel?

General al-Jamasi answereed: Until we achieve a final agreement between Egypt and Israel "as part of a comprehensive settlement" this question is premature.

Answering a question about the chances of bringing the Egyptian and Israeli views closer together and whether the Egyptian side understands the defense problems as seen from the Israeli viewpoint, Israeli Defense Minister Weizman said that he submitted Israel's view on the problems of security and defense and the Egyptian side submitted a number of proposals regarding defense commitments and the Egyptian side's views. He added: We will discuss these points this evening or tomorrow morning. It is clear that there is a gap between the Egyptian and Israeli views in the committee, and we hope that this gap will be bridged.

Asked about reports about new Israeli settlements in the Arab territories and the connection between these settlements and Israel's security, Weizman said that there is an Israeli Government decision that no new Israeli settlements be built and the current talks with the Egyptian side deal with the settlements that have already been built.

Weizman was asked: Were there definite proposals regarding the question of the settlements during yesterday's and today's talks or were these talks restricted to defining the position of each side? He answered that the purpose of the talks is not only to define positions but also to discuss the settlements, and I have already been asked about this. He pointed out that there is a gap between the two sides and that this gap could be bridged.

Asked if any progress has been achieved in the talks on these issues, he said that the talks in themselves are considered progress.

General al-Jamasi was asked: What is your position regarding the Israeli airports in Sinai?

He answered: This issue has been discussed and will be further discussed. So far we have not reached a decision on it.

Weizman was asked during the press conference what action Egypt would take if Israel starts a war on another front. He replied that when the Egyptians talk about peace they mean peace on all fronts.

Asked about the dividing line between the Israeli Negev Desert and Egypt's Sinai, the Israeli defense minister said that the dividing line is the line between the Internationally recognized borders.

Asked about the importance of the Israeli airports in Sinai, Weizman claimed that their presence is important for the air defense of Israel and that the number of airfields and the number of aircraft is a difficult problem for a small state. There is another problem, he said, related to the Tiran Strait and the Israeli presence there since the Israeli presence in Sharm ash-Shaykh (?will officially change from its present state) at a later stage.

Jerusalem Report On Press Conference

TA121432Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Text] The Egyptian war minister, Gen Muhammad 'Abd al-Ghani al-Jamasi, said that Israel and Egypt are indeed far from each other in their views regarding the settlements in the Sinai but that the gap in the views should not be taken too literally. Results can be reached through persistence and a constructive approach. General al-Jamasi expressed indignation over the fact that the journalists are too preoccupied with the question of settlements and stressed that this is only one of the issues under discussion.

Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman said on this matter that there are chances to find a solution but that the problems are not simple. He emphasized that there is a sincere desire to reach successful results. The defense minister and the Egyptian war minister spoke in a joint press conference in Cairo after a session of the Military Committee. The talks will be continued this evening.

The chief of staff, Lt Gen Mordekhay Gur, and the Egyptian chief of staff, Muhammad 'Ali Fahmi, surveyed the defense questions of the two countries. The Egyptian war minister refused to detail the content of the surveys to the reporters. General al-Jamasi reported that the Military Committee had dealt with the military and defense questions of Israel and Egypt. Nevertheless, he remarked that the Military Committee is part of the Cairo conference, and the subject of the Cairo conference is the achievement ofa comprehensive solution He added that the peace settlement will include demilitarized zones in Sinai and the size of the Egyptian Army will be determined according to peacetime requirements.

The defense minister, 'Ezer Weizman, added to this that in addition to the demilitarized zones there will also be limited forces zones and regular zones. However, no agreed solution has been reached so far.

Sinai Demilitarized Zones

TA121713Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1700 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Text] Egypt has agreed in principle to have demilitarization in Sinai. Our correspondent in Cairo, Roni Dani'el, reports that this is a turning point in the Egyptian position. The Egyptian agreement to demilitarization is included in its peace plan which was submitted at noon in the discussions of the Military Committee. At the end of the session, a press conference was held and Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman reported that there will be demilitarized, limited forces and regular zones in Sinai but that the matter has not been agreed on yet.

12 Jan Military Committee Session

TA122046Y Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Excerpts] The Joint Israeli-Egyptian Military Committee will conclude its first round of talks in Cairo tomorrow and the defense minister, 'Ezer Weizman, will have a meeting with his Egyptian colleague, General al-Jamasi. The Israeli delegation to the talks will return to Israel tomorrow for consultations and the talks will continue in Cairo next Tuesday. Our emissary to Cairo, our military correspondent 'Amiram Nir, reports about the course of the talks today. [begin videotape]

[Nir] The representatives of Egypt and Israel discussed the basic foundations of the settlement in the Sinai at the At-Tahirah Palace for 3 hours this morning. The discussion began at 1000 [0800 GMT] sharp with Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizamn giving a short introduction. Then the chief of staff, Lt Gen Morekhay Gur, presented a 2-hour lecture for the Egyptians. Lieutenant General Gur analyzed the circumstances leading to the outbreak of wars in the region and how Egypt was twice dragged into a war which it did not want. He wanted to examine the ability of Egypt to avoid being dragged into another war in future, if, after the signing of a peace treaty, there were a conflagration along one of the other borders of Israel.

The Egyptians listened to his remarks attentively, and in reply General al-Jamasi and Chief of Staff Fahmi said that a full peace will include the solution of the Palestinian problem and that this in turn will surely eliminate the conflict Israel has with the other Arab countries.

Then, the Egyptian settlement plan was presented for the first time. Basically, the plan deals with the return of the IDF to the 1967 borders without any sort of Israeli presence, either a military presence or an organized civilian presence, in Sinai. However--and this constitutes the novelty--in the course of the presentation, which lasted only a few minutes, an Egyptian map regarding the settlement proposal in Sinai was presented for the first time. The map included buffer zones, limited forces zones and demilitarized zones. These principles are in fact the principles on which Israel insists concerning the distribution of areas in Sinai. Nonetheless, the breadth of the zones proposed by the Egyptians is much smaller [than that proposed by Israel]. The map was not handed to the Israelis, and the Egyptian proposal is, for the time being, a verbal one.

Now, the Egyptian and Israeli proposals of principles are set out against each other, and the discussion taking place is a general discussion of the various aspects of both proposals. In the framework of this discussion, the possibility of a certain reduction in the size of both armies was also raised. When we entered to take photographs at the end of the meeting, the general discussion was only beginning, and it was agreed to hold another meeting this evening. Although nothing was said in our presence about the substance of the discussion, it was possible to note that the atmosphere, at least compared with yesterday's, was very good and hearty. Jokes were exchanged and even reciprocal invitations to visit military exercises. The names and numbers of military units were mentioned relatively freely. No nervousness or tension was noticeable, although those who are knowledgeable about the course of the talks emphasize the anxiety and seriousness with which the defense minister treats every move and every statement on the matter, a matter which he views as determining things that will bind future generations. This kind of tension was also felt in Weizman's introductory remarks at the press conference held at noon yesterday on the lawn in front of the At-Tahirah Palace.

The agreement regarding the nature of the deployment of the Egyptian forces in Sinai is in the meantime the main common denominator between the parties. Progress on other issues or agreement on other issues was not achieved. This evening, the chief of staff will reply, apparently at length, to the Egyptian settlement proposal. Tomorrow morning the heads of the delegations, Weizman and Al-Jamasi, are going to have a brief meeting. Afterward the Israeli delegation will tour Cairo and its surroundings. This tour will end at Cairo airport at about 1100 [0900 GMT] when the Israeli Air Force plane will take off for Israel. The talks in Cairo will apparently be resumed next Tuesday. [end videotape]

Agreement on Sinai Zones

TA130634Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0500 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[From the Morning Newsreel]

[Text] The defense minister arrives today to report and counsult. From Cairo our military correspondent, Roni Dani'el, reports.

[Dani'el--live or recorded] The closing session of the Military Committee in the At-Tahirah Palace has come up with the first agreement. Following the presentation of the Egyptian plan and the detailed reply by the chief of staff at the evening session, the two delegations came to a general agreement on one of the basic questions.

The Military Committee agreed on the division of Sinai into three zones: a limited forces zone, where the Egyptian Army will be stationed, although with smaller forces than it has today; a demilitarized zone, where only civilian activity will be permitted; and a third zone, which will be a buffer zone extending along the international border. In this zone only a UN presence will be permitted. This definition, the United Nations only, on the surface contradicts Israel's desire for a defense force for the settlements. This is not the case. The issue of the settlements has not yet been agreed on and when they say the United Nations only this does not refer to the settlements.

There is not yet any agreement on the width of each of the zones or the time to be taken by putting this into operation, but what was achieved yesterday may be regarded as an important step toward the objective. There is, of course, much still in dispute and the description by Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman of "hard talks" still holds true. The minister of defense, his deputy, the chief of staff, the head of intelligence and some of their entourage will return today at 0830 to Israel. The head of the planning division, Avraham Tamir, will remain in Cairo. He headed the team which prepared all the important and excellent staff work for this conference. According to an announcement by the Egyptian Army spokesman, Hasan al-Khatib, Major General Tamir will stay here for the continuation of the discussions and to give clarifications. The Israeli delegation will return to Cairo on Tuesday. This is Roni Dani'el in Cairo.

Weizman Interview

TA131215Y Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 13 Jan 78 pp 1, 4 TA

[Telegraphed by Eytan Haber, YEDI'OT AHARONOT special correspondent to Cairo]

[Excerpt] The steps toward peace will be smaller than expected both in Egypt and Israel, but ultimately, at the end of negotiations which are expected to be exhausting, we will have to reach peace or some agreement satisfactory to both parties, Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman told YEDI'OT AHARONOT.

Question: Do the Egyptians understand Israel's security needs?

Answer: They understand that Israel's security needs must be discussed. If the Egyptians do not understand our security needs, the negotiations will be very difficult.

Question: Was an agreement reached on any subject between Israel and Egypt?

Answer: We have been in Cairo for only 2 days. It is impossible in less than 48 hours to solve problems created over 30 years. No total agreement was reached on any of the subjects raised for debate in Cairo. However, this does not mean that they do not agree to some of our proposals and vice versa. There is certainly a good basis for the continuation of the talks.

Question: Is it possible to say that the gap between the positions of the parties was reduced in yesterday's talks?

Answer: There is a gap, a serious one, but there is agreement on several principles.

Question: The Egyptians submitted a proposal of their own yesterday. Will Israel be able to accept it?

Answer: The Israeli side can agree to several of the principles presented in the Egyptian proposal, but when we get to the substance and essence inherent in these proposals, the way is still long. Hard debates will be held. There will surely be crises. However, on certain substantive issues I do not see any room for concessions. Some of the Egyptian theses are totally unacceptable to us.

Question: Were you surprised by the Egyptian proposals?

Answer: No. Their arguments have not changed.

Question: Was the issue of the settlements in Sinai raised in the discussion?

Answer: We said that we will not now add settlements in Sinai to those already existing. Nonetheless, we will flesh out the existing ones.

At the cabinet meeting on Sunday the defense minister will present the Egyptian proposals submitted in Cairo yesterday, proposals regarding which Israeli sources said that "they cannot be rejected outright."

The defense minister, who is returning to Israel today, will apparently meet with Prime Minister Begin even before the cabinet meeting in order to report to him on the course of the deliberations in the At-Tahirah Palace in Cairo.

Gur Comments on Meetings

TA131240Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1105 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[From the Midday Newsreel]

[Text] How would Egypt act if another Arab country went to war with Israel? This was one of the questions we put forward in Cairo, and now, as if to make this question even sharper than it is, the debates of the Egypt-Israel Military Committee are being held against the background of a reinforcement of the Syrian Army. Various reports over the last few days point to a massive airlift to Syria and an increase in the number of Soviet advisers in Damascus. Roni Dani'el, our envoy to Cairo, heard, at the end of the first stage of the debates of the Military Committee, the evaluations of the chief of staff, Lt Gen Mordekhay Gur, on the dangers of the reinforcement of the eastern front and also from him a first impression of the Cairo talks: [begin recording]

[Gur] The eastern front, but particularly Syria and Iraq, and also Jordan, may certainly be an active front, and this is one of our main considerations in the debates. And we put this forward pretty clearly and sharply in the debates yesterday, both when I presented the comprehensive security problem and when, in the evening, I referred to several of their issues, so that we are not ignoring what is happening there. As I mentioned earlier, one of the Egyptians' main internal problems must be in understanding our fears of threats from other directions.

[Dani'el] Mr Chief of Staff, after 2 days of debates, what are your feelings? To what extent do the Egyptians grasp Israel's security demands?

[Gur] I think I can sum up by saying that both sides are listening, coming closer, and each one is trying to understand the other. I estimate that in such a process, if it continues seriously, it will be possible to come much closer together. [end recording]

A concluding report on the first stage of the talks of the Military Committee and the full interview with the chief of staff will be broadcast tomorrow in the Weekly Newsreel at 1000 [0800 GMT] on Network B.

JERUSALEM POST CARRIES INTERVIEW WITH AS-SADAT

TA130640Y Jerusalem POST in English 13 Jan 78 pp 1, 5 TA

[By correspondent David Landau]

[Text] Aswan--Egyptian President Anwar as-Sadat yesterday unveiled to the Jerusalem POST a proposal for an Israel-Egypt-Jordan-Palestinian committee to work out security arrangements on the West Bank and listed the six security provisions which Egypt has offered Israel in Sinai.

But the Egyptian leader, in his first-ever exclusive interview with an Israeli newspaper, asserted bitterly and repeatedly that "it is not security, but land" that Israel is demanding.

In forceful, sombre tones, he charged that "the new spirit" engendered by his peace initiative had not affected Israeli policymaking. "It lives with me only," he declared.

In a wide-ranging 75-minute conversation at his winter home overlooking the Nile cataracts here, President as-Sadat also said that he could accept Premier Begin's self-rule proposal for the West Bank and Gaza as a transitional measure provided Israel pledged in advance that the Palestinians would ultimately have self-determination. The length of the transitional period could be agreed upon without difficulty, he added.

While he inveighed bitterly against Israel's settlements in Sinai and termed Begin's idea of the IDF defending them after peace "absurd," As-Sadat carefully did not rule out an exchange of territory in Sinai as a possible last resort.

He also did not turn down the idea of Israeli, or joint Israeli-Jordanian, patrols policing the West Bank even if and after a Palestinian state is set up there. This would be for the Israel-Egypt-Jordan-Palestinian committee to decide, he said.

But on the question of withdrawal--total, unreserved withdrawal from Sinai and the West Bank--As-Sadat was adamant. His clear warning throughout the interview was, that without this, the peace initiative would collapse.

Reviewing the recent past, the Egyptian president asserted that there need never have been an October war had Golda Meir responded to his February 1971 declaration of readiness to make peace with Israel.

As-Sadat declined to specify which Palestinians should sit with Israel, Jordan and Egypt on the proposed joint committee to discuss West Bank security measures. "Now we may differ (on the definition of Palestinians)," he said, "but when we reach agreement on the principle I think we shall not differ any more on that."

On the idea of Israeli or Israeli-Jordanian patrols (as distinct from a permanent Israeli presence), in the West Bank, As-Sadat said: "I should like that you do not propose anything now, until the concerned parties convene."

Here are As-Sadat's specific proposals for security provisions in the Sinai:

"Demilitarized zones on a reciprocal basis. I have said that I shall take into consideration the size of Israel and the size of Sinai."

Early-warning stations on both sides. These would be manned by "a third party"--"I shall never put Egyptians on your territory because I will not agree to have Israelis on my land."

"Areas of limited armaments" (he also referred to these as "areas of light armaments"). Asked if this provision could include eventual cuts in overall armed forces, As-Sadat said: "We shall put this provision to the military experts to translate."

"UN forces along the borders and in Sharm Ash-Shaykh."

A declaration in the peace agreement "that the Straits of Aqaba are an international waterway."

A joint committee of Israeli and Egyptian military men to meet on a regular and permanent basis in Al-'Arish and Beersheba.

As-Sadat continued: "But say this to your people: You can drop all six points--instead of them I would have preferred you to agree to the fact that our intention is that you live securely. To that end we shall be opening the borders, we shall be normalizing relations."

But for much of the interview, the president spoke in sad, disillusioned and sometimes ominous tones of what he deems Israel's failure to respond to his peace initiative.

Sometimes he even referred to that initiative in the past tense. But there were hopeful moments too. "Let us hope," he said at one point, "that in the near future we can reach something."

He was especially disturbed and distressed, he said, by Premier Begin's speech to his Herut Central Committee on Sunday night, and by the government's new settlement decisions in the Rafah salient. Begin, he said, had "returned to the language of threats" in his Sunday speech.

He himself had no wish to enter into a war of polemics, he said. After all, they had decided during his visit to Jerusalem that each was entitled to his own opinion and they would "sit down and discuss differences in a civilized way."

But, "unfortunately, really, we're heading towards the old problem: Is it peace or land? This is the question that needs an answer from your side. Until now you've been after land. I'm sorry to say this...the essence of my visit may be misunderstood by some of your people in the government, by Mr Begin and others.

"In the Knesset I declared: We refused you in the area. Now we accept you. We refused to agree to any of the items of "the nature of the peace" that you submitted. Well, I said as the leader (of the) most powerful Arab country, a country on whose decision war and peace will be determined, "yes, I agree to the nature of the peace, to coexistence, to living together, in our borders; with the right of all of us to independence and secure borders...that there should be no more war after October.

"Don't you see that you have got everything? And now you are starting to bargain with me on my land. No! You have lost the essence of my initiative through this logic that I have seen from Mr Begin and others."

But he did not regret, he continued, that he had made the visit to Jerusalem. "It was a sacred mission on my side.

"But let me see until the convening of the two committees. Then after that I shall have my say..."

Critics in the Arab world had told him he ought to have an "arranged the price with the Israelis first," before embarking on his journey to Jerusalem, As-Sadat said. "But this was not the spirit of the initiative at all. I am not, and never have been, a traditional politician--nor ever will be...."

Nothing that Defence Minister 'Ezer Weizman said to him here on Wednesday had helped improve the clouded atmosphere created by the Begin speech and the settlement decisions, As-Sadat said.

"I like the man 'Ezra...er, 'Ezer--really. But there is no change. No change."

(As the POST reported yesterday, Weizman sought here to downplay Begin's hardline speech to As-Sadat, explaining that it was a reaction to internal political pressures.)

They met "for a very long time and I gave him my ideas and he also discussed many points...but what Mr Begin has already stated the previous days means that the fundamental elements of my visit are not recognized by Mr Begin and the same old attitude prevails."

It was "completely wrong" for each side to try to find "strategic advantages against the other. If I were looking for strategic advantages, I would never have visited Jerusalem," he said.

As-Sadat refused vigorously to see Israel's relinquishing Sharm ash-Shaykh as a meaningful concession brought about by his visit--on two counts. First, there can be no "concession" of what is "my land." And second, Sharm has "lost its importance" since the October war "when you closed Elat yourselves--because I closed Bab el Mandeb," he said.

Despite the forceful and repeated rejection of any future Israeli presence in the Sinai, there appeared to be two gleams of light deliberately left open by the president. One was his frequent references to his refusal "to be forced" to accept the Israeli settlements "on my land." In this connection he recalled that he had some time ago--well before he launched his initiative--invited all Jews of Egyptian origin to resettle in Egypt, "and lots of them have registered their names at various Egyptian embassies." He also referred to my own presence "with me here on the Nile...could you have imagined sitting here with me one day before the Jerusalem visit?"

Now plainly As-Sadat was aware of the tenuous link in any comparison between the possible return of former Egyptian Jews, or the presence in Egypt of Israeli newsmen, and the long-term political problem of Israeli settlements in the Sinai. The explanation seemed to lie in the word "forcing." He would not be "forced," he kept saying, into permitting Israeli settlements to remain. Perhaps though, the implication seemed to be, with goodwill some voluntary arrangement of sufferance could be worked out--if the Israelis now living in Sinai wish to continue living there either as Egyptian citizens or as permanent visitors to Egypt.

But if there was this implication in As-Sadat's words and references, it was heavily veiled. Angrily he declared: "Who could you imagine anyone agreeing to giving his land to others? Look, they say they will be defending them (the settlements) by the Israeli Army. Really...absurd: I could never agree to such logic."

Another apparent gleam of light was in the president's delicate avoidance of rejecting outright the idea of a land exchange in Sinai.

"Well," he said. "We have our international borders. I don't think my people would agree to a new demarcation--in spite of the fact that it would be acre-for-acre."

I suggested that his recommendation would have considerable influence with his people. Whereupon he deftly changed the subject--leaving me with the distinct impression that the idea of an exchange of territory--the Rafah salient for an equal chunk of the Negev--is currently on the negotiating agenda.

Referring to the visit here Wednesday of Rabbi Alexander Schindler, chairman of the presidents conference of major American Jewish organizations, As-Sadat said he had "liked the man" and had urged him to urge those he represents "not to misunderstand us again."

"I told him: The issue of security--yes. Whatever measures are needed I am ready to provide. But not at the expense of my land.

"He was very optimistic, so I told him I am always an optimist--but the fundamental elements are not recognized by Mr Begin."

He added significantly that he was "very happy" that Schindler was returning to Israel and would report to the prime minister.

Looking back on his earlier "initiative" of February 1971--when, soon after assuming power, he declared that Egypt would be ready to sign a peace agreement with Israel--As-Sadat said he had been deeply disappointed with then-premier Golda Meir's response.

Dayan--the "desert fox"--was at his peak (in 1971), As-Sadat said: "They thought I would never be able to fight. When Golda Meir told Rogers that whenever there was an Arab leader prepared to declare that he is ready to sign a peace agreement with her, she would be putting all her cards on the table. I did (so) declare. And when Rogers came here to Cairo I said: 'What do you want of me?' And he replied: 'No'" (meaning that there was nothing further he could ask of As-Sadat).

"She (Golda) scared Rogers out of his job and continued this arrogant policy," he added.

The president stressed that if peace did come he would "not want politics at all "but would concentrate wholly and solely on "reconstruction" which, he emphasized, his country badly needs.

Only yesterday, he said, before the interview, he had "given hell" to local officials and to the relevant cabinet minister for failing to meet his targets in the export of tinned fish from Lake an-Nasir, the huge artificial sea created by the Aswan High Dam. "We could have been exporting millions and millions of dollars--like you have done with my Lake Bardawile," he said unsmiling.

And his message to the people of Israel at this point in the peace talks:

"I am not sorry for what I have done. In spite of the fact that now everything is leading to the, er, er, er, unknown. I am awfully sorry to say this...really, but I do not regret and I shall not regret. For as I have said--my mission was sacred.

"If it ends in my resignation, I will be happy. Yes, because I feel that I tried to do everything for my future generations, but, er, er...I couldn't, well, let someone else continue....
"At the end, I am sure, tell your people, love will prevail. At last...I think so. It has always been like this with me, in my 58 years of life. Love will prevail."

SADDAM HUSAYN ADDRESSES MILITARY UNITS IN SOUTH

JN131018Y Baghdad INA in Arabic 0735 GMT 13 Jan 78 JN

[Text] Baghdad, 13 January--Saddam Husayn, Revolution Command Council vice chairman, has emphasized that the Arab nation will continue to be capable of building its future through liberation.

Addressing military units in Dhi Qar Province in southern Iraq yesterday, Saddam Husayn said: The current setbacks are merely taking place on fronts and are not crushing comprehensive setbacks, because the Arab nation is still alive and fighting on other fronts. He added: The chances to wrest the initiative from the enemy still exist and will continue to exist. If an Arab front is wiped out, this does not mean that the doors are closed to the future of the Arab nation and its building along the road of liberation.

Saddam Husayn stressed the command's determination to build steadfast Iraq as a base for the Arab nation. He also noted the command's motto of "no retreat; forward in all areas inside and outside Iraq."

PAPER NOTES U.S. MAY RESTRICT OIL IMPORTS

LD121801Y Baghdad ATH-THAWRAH in Arabic 10 Jan 78 p 2 LD

[News and Comment]

[Text] U.S. Energy Secretary James Schlesinger has warned that his country will seek to restrict oil purchases from abroad through imposing import duties in case congress fails to lay down a program with sufficient incentives for economizing in energy consumption.

Schlesinger made this statement following his meeting with U.S. President Jimmy Carter last night.

The U.S. secretary will visit Saudi Arabia and Morocco in connection with U.S. oil imports and the drop in the dollar value in the international market.

Comment: James Schlesinger's warning to impose duty on oil imports to his country is merely a maneuver aimed at bringing pressure on the U.S. Congress to approve President Carter's energy program.

Raising the price of oil consumed in the United States through the proposed duties will provide the Carter administration with new financial income that will help it reduce the deficit in the U.S. federal budget. Meanwhile the United States will continue to obtain cheap OPEC oil through threatening to reduce U.S. oil imports and subsequently exerting pressure for the continued freeze of oil prices. This is confirmed by the fact that Schlesinger's statement came on the eve of his visit to OPEC's biggest oil exporting country which has special ties of coordination and understanding on the question of oil with the United States. Thus OPEC oil would be indirectly contributing to financing the U.S. Treasury through the policies being pursued by certain oil countries.

However, what matters is that even if this duty is imposed on U.S. oil imports, oil consumption is not expected to drop. The opposite could be true in that even if duty imposed on oil imports oil will remain the cheapest and an indispensable source of energy for planes, cars, trains as well as for petrochemicals. This fact once again underlines the need to rectify the oil prices.

HUSAYN EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER CURRENT SITUATION

JN130800Y Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 13 Jan 78 p 1 JN

[Text] Amman, Jan. 12, JNA--His Majesty King Husayn Thursday evening told members of the visiting U.S. Congressional delegation that "the present state of affairs in the region worries me to a great extent and it is the duty of everyone to try to salvage the situation." "President as-Sadat's initiative has not met with proper Israeli response," King Husayn said at a meeting with the delegation from the House of Representatives at the Royal Hashemite Court.

"Israel has not responded in any way to his move and I am very disappointed because of the Israeli position", the king was quoted as saying in an Arabic language release by the JORDAN NEWS AGENCY.

"Begin's proposals were a tremendous shock," his majesty added.

Answering a question by a member of the delegation on his concept of Palestinian self-determination, his majesty said, "Israel's prime minister (Menahem Begin) says that Jordan has no right in the West Bank of Jordan. But although we were admitted to the United Nations as a state of two united banks, our position since 1967, before and after the Rabat conference, was based on the necessity of the people of Palestine to exercise the right of self-determination. We call for Palestinian self-determination under international supervision. The Palestinians have the right to participate in forging their future. We know that we can live with any path they choose to follow as a result of the exercise of free choice."

We Will Back What the Palestinians Choose

On the possibility of setting up a Palestinian state, which would come through the process of self-determination, King Husayn said that the possibility was there, and "we will back what the Palestinians choose knowing what strong ties exist among the Arabs in this region."

"We agree to any sort of relations between Jordan and the Palestinian entity as long as they come as a result of free choice by the Palestinians. In the past, we rejected any premature announcement of ties because we want this to come as a result of free choice... The Palestinian personality is an important factor, fraternal relations are important too. This is a matter to be discussed within the context of Israeli withdrawal," his majesty said.

Agreement on Principles Key to Arab Participation

Answering a question on the means of moving the process of peace forward, the king said that "there must be an agreement on the principles upon which peace would be founded: total Israeli withdrawal and Palestinian self-determination. If President as-Sadat calls for joint Arab action, that must be based on agreement on these points. This is the key to peace."

On the possibility of Jordan's participation in peace efforts he said that since 1967 he had been doing his best to achieve progress towards peace but Israel's position had always been negative. In short, it refused to withdraw.

"Our past experience decided our present position."

Conditions for Peace

"Any settlement of the problem must be based on total Israeli withdrawal, guaranting the legitimate rights of the Palestinians--including the right of refugees to return to their land or to receive compensation--and the right of self-determination. Jerusalem must be returned to Arab sovereignty.

"Security in the region according to U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338 cannot be established by building settlements and military zones in the occupied land," his majesty said.

King Husayn said that Egypt was in close touch with the progress of the Palestinian issue.

Israel has shown nothing except short-sightedness and dependence on military force since President as-Sadat's initiative, the king said.

The members of the delegation expressed their appreciation for King Husayn's and Jordan's efforts for peace in the region.

The meeting was also attended by Chief of the Royal Court Sharif 'Abd al-Hamid Sharaf, Minister of the Court 'Amir Khammash and the U.S. ambassador to Amman, Thomas Pickering.

SENATE SPEAKER RECEIVES CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

JN121644Y Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1600 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] Bahjat at-Talhuni, Senate speaker, met today with the U.S. Congressional delegation presently visiting Jordan. Mr at-Talhuni spoke about the Middle East conflict and Jordan's position on that issue. He said: The establishment of a just and lasting peace in the Middle East must be based on two fundamental principles--complete Israeli withdrawal from the Arab territories occupied in 1967 and recognition of the Palestinian people's rights including a means to enable this dispersed people to return to their homeland. He also spoke about the Palestinian refugees and their suffering in the camps in which they are living.

The Senate speaker stressed that Jordan believes in world peace and that it is working within Arab solidarity and joint action. It adheres to the resolutions of the Arab summits and meetings and calls for the implementation of Security Council and United Nations resolutions.

Delegation Leaves Amman

JN131254Y Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 13 Jan 78 JN

[Text] A U.S. Congressional delegation left Amman this morning after an official 3-day visit to Jordan. During the visit the members of the delegation met His Majesty King Husayn, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the senate president, the commander in chief of the Jordanian armed forces and a number of senior officials. The delegation was seen off by a number of high-ranking officials and the U.S. ambassador in Amman.

KING HUSAYN RECEIVES HAMAMI FAMILY DELEGATION

JN122130Y Amman Domestic Service in Arabic 2100 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received a delegation of the Hamami family at the Royal Hashemite Court this evening. They expressed to his majesty their thanks and gratitude for his kind gesture in extending condolences to them over the death of their departed relative, the late Sa'id Hamami, former PLO representative in London. They expressed the wish that God protect His Majesty King Husayn and grant him good health.

KHADDAM DECRIES EGYPT'S POLICIES IN NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW

LD131033Y Rome L'UNITA in Italian 11 Jan 78 p 19 LD

[Unattributed interview in Damascus with Syrian Foreign Minister 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam--date not given]

[Text] Damascus--For 7 years chief of Syrian foreign policy, a close collaborator of President al-Asad and one of the best known politicians of the Arab world, Deputy Prime Minister Foreign Minister 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam agreed to illustrate for L'UNITA readers Syria's views on the latest developments in the Middle East situation, following the Ismailia summit and Carter's meetings in Teheran, Riyadh and Aswan and the reasons for his opposition to As-Sadat's initiative.

"The situation in the Middle East," Khaddam began, "has undoubtedly become more complicated as a result of the Egyptian president's visit to Jerusalem and its effects, which have undermined and destroyed all the efforts made in the previous phase to achieve a just and lasting peace. Why did this initiative by the Egyptian president annul previous peace efforts? This is a natural question, which can be answered as follows:

"First, is the situation better now than before the Israeli-Egyptian meetings? Certainly not. Before, we had coordinated Arab action to achieve a just and lasting peace. But what do we see now? We see an Arab country pursuing a policy damaging to the Arab unity and to their objectives, a policy which has led to a split and disorder in the Arab position. This situation is certainly not in the interests of a just and lasting peace. Be that as it may, it favors the implementation of capitulatory plans at the expense of the Arabs, of their national rights and of their legitimate interests.

"Second, before the Egyptian president's visit to Israel, the Israelis were extremely stubborn and refused to take any serious step toward peace; they proposed terms and conditions which did not meet the objectives indicated by international public opinion for the realization of a just and lasting peace. We all remember the Israelis' maneuvers and their refusal to accept the principal of a withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and to discuss the Palestinian issue. This was the cause before the visit, despite the fact that the Arabs were then united, just as international public opinion was, in making serious efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace based on the UN resolutions. If this was how the world stood in the face of Israeli stubbornness, how can we believe that the Israelis will agree to move in the direction of peace following the effects of As-Sadat's visit in terms of the split in the Arab positions--a split which is naturally in Israel's interests? If a united and concerted Arab stance and the potential which it expressed, backed by world public opinion, was unable to influence Israel to move toward peace, how can one imagine that, in view of the split among the Arabs, there is anyone who can push the Israelis toward a just and lasting peace?

"Third," Khaddam continued, "peace has certain ingredients and so does action for achieving it. These ingredients are a complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories and the recognition of the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights, including their rights to return, to self-determination and to an independent state. The realization of such a peace should have taken place through the UN resolutions and bodies because that would have created the natural and specific climate for achieving a serious, just and lasting peace.

By meeting with the enemy, however--and especially with an enemy such as Israel, with all its hypocrisy and stubbornness--the Egyptian president has found himself faced with the alternative of accepting what Israel offered and proposed. Therefore, the accords which the Egyptian president can achieve will result in Egypt's isolation and will not lead to peace in the area. Furthermore, such agreements, being based on concessions to the enemy, are not destined to last. Historical facts," the foreign minister asserted at this point, introducing an argument which has become habitual, "prove it. The most explicit example is the peace treaty signed by Marshal Petain with the Nazis, at the expense of the French people's dignity, of their national rights and national honor; the French rejected it and continued their struggle against th. Nazi occupation until that treaty was swept away. This is natural because any agreement which is not balanced cannot last and the peoples will sooner or later certainly find a way of getting rid of it.

"Fourth and last, the conflict in the area is a conflict between Israel on the one hand and the Arabs on the other; and if, therefore, it involves all the Arabs in one way or another, peace cannot be achieved without the Arabs' approval. The conflict between the Arabs and Israel is not a conflict between Egypt and Israel; Egypt is just one of the sides involved. Therefore, its signing of any agreement outside the natural field of combat cannot in any event mark its end. If we consider this conflict from its origins we will see that Egypt has had a role, but neither a decisive nor a preeminent role; the role can only be decisive and preeminent if it favors national rights. In 1948 the Egyptian Army did fight, but the key theater of war was in the east; in subsequent wars and especially during the October war the main confrontation took place on the Golan Heights, as proved by the size of the Israeli and Syrian losses in that area. I believe that whoever believes that the Egyptian regime can determine peace or war shows that he is oversimplifying. No member of the Egyptian Government on his own can do anything but shirk his pan-Arab responsibilities and throw himself into the enemy's lap by surrendering.

[Question] How do you assess Europe's attitude toward and role in the Middle East crisis?

[Answer] Before the Egyptian's president's visit to Jerusalem progress had unquestionably been made in Europe's stance regarding the Middle East crisis. Nevertheless, since then certain voices have spoken out in certain European countries to praise the Egyptian president for going to Jerusalem, under the illusion that it would encourage the peace process. I believe that those same voices have begun to realize that what was done has, on the contrary, in fact obstructed the peace process. Any discussion of a separate peace between Egypt and Israel does not guarantee peace in the area. Of course we would have liked the Europeans not to forget the circumstances of World Wars I and II and not to disregard their current status. For instance, in the European Community, which is composed of various states which have in the past had a long history of wars against each other, no country could take a separate decision which would affect the entire community. In this case, therefore, how could we (bearing in mind that the situations are different between Arabs and between Europeans, because the Arabs are part of a nation) agree to Egypt's taking a separate decision destined to harm the Arab interests at their roots, without remaining loyal to the unity of the Arab position, to the viewpoints of the Arab states and the collective Arab decisions?

It is natural for us to ask the Europeans to look at As-Sadat's actions from this viewpoint also.

[Question] Finally, are you satisfied with how relations stand between Syria and Italy, partly in view of your visit to Rome last July?

[Answer] We in Syria truly want to witness a positive and constructive development in relations with Italy, for a number of reasons. Italian Foreign Minister Forlani's visit to Damascus and my visit to Italy made a good contribution to progress in relations between the two countries. As far as we are concerned, we will make every effort and work hard to progress along this road.

"It is natural," Khaddam concluded on this point, "to state that the Arab forces which denounced and condemned the Egyptian president's initiative have exerted real and decisive energies in the various areas of the conflict. On the basis of all these considerations, we believe that the Egyptian president's visit to Jerusalem undermined the efforts made at the international level to promote the peace process."

But, we asked Khaddam, what, then, is Syria's actual stance regarding the peace process? Damascus' attendance at the Tripoli "rejection" summit prompted certain sectors of the mass media to accuse Syria of being opposed to peace. What does the minister have to say about that?

"I can assure you," Khaddam emphatically replied, "that the Arabs want peace--a just, honorable and lasting peace; a peace which will return their lands to them and their inalienable national rights to the Palestinian people. If certain circles allied to world Zionism claim that peace must be achieved on the basis of Israel's retention of advantages at the Arabs' expense, this will not be peace but surrender and capitulation, and thus unacceptable to our peoples. To struggle for the cause of achieving a just peace is one thing, but it is quite another thing to throw oneself into the enemy's lap and to make concessions to him. Certain Western circles have described the Egyptian president's visit as courageous. I believe that this assessment is intended to encourage As-Sadat to make further concessions, taking advantage of the complexes motivating the Egyptian president, including his tendency to become an instrument of imperialism not only in the Middle East but also in Africa, and his dream of gaining a broad area of influence in Africa and the Third World, through alliance with Zionism and imperialism. This explains why he has moved toward a path which contradicts the interests of Egypt and the Arabs and explains his tendency to alienate the forces of liberation and progress in the world. I do not know why some people in the West describe the Egyptian president as courageous, after he has dissipated Egypt's honor and the Arabs' dignity and rights, when Westerners themselves did not call Tito, Roosevelt and Churchill cowards because they did not surrender to Nazism. These circles do not attribute the virtue of courage to the Egyptian president because of his valor (since it is not courageous to abandon one's national rights) but because they want to make him sink into the process of dissipating Egypt's interests with a view to insuring certain advantages for Israël and at the same time to remove Egypt from the field of the Arab-Israeli conflict, to use the Egyptian regime as an instrument against movements of liberation and progress in various parts of Africa and the Arab world and to increase the differences and contradictions among the Arabs, since all this would help give imperialism further opportunities for appropriating the Arabs' wealth and potential. I reassert once again that we favor a just, lasting and honorable peace and this is why we condemned the Egyptian president's initiative."

[Question] What, then are Syria's specific proposals for a peace agreement in the Middle East?

[Answer] As I have said, the ingredients of peace, which we have repeated on a number of occasions, are based on the following two principles: 1) a complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories; 2) the recognition of the Palestinian people's inalienable national rights, including the right to return, to self-determination and to build an independent national state.

[Question] In the present situation does Syria still maintain that the right place to realize these principles is the Geneva conference?

[Answer] The Egyptian president's initiative and the subsequent and current developments have, as I have said, undermined all the efforts being made for the cause of peace and furthermore they have contravened international law by bypassing and overruling the United Nations and its resolutions. This has created an imbalanced situation in the area. We in Syria are, therefore, pursuing contacts with the fraternal Arab countries aimed at reestablishing the balances, dismantling the Egyptian president's great conspiracy and realizing the best formula for guaranteeing our pan-Arab rights.

[Question] In view of this action, Syria naturally attaches a top-level role to the PLO, both in negotiations and in the future peace solution?

[Answer] Our position on the Palestinian problem and on the PLO has always been clear; it is based on the resolutions of the Arab summits, especially Algiers and Rabat, which consider the PLO the Palestinian people's only legitimate representative. Syria, therefore, considers the PLO the Palestinian people's only legitimate representative.

[Question] It was announced in Tripoli that Syria and the PLO constitute the spearhead of the "rejection" or "steadfastness" front, as it prefers to call itself. Does this mean that your relations of cooperation with the PLO are in an expansion phase?

[Answer] It is natural that there are good relations between Syria and the PLO. The PLO is part of the "resistance and steadfastness" front created by the states which attended the Tripoli conference. We are agreed on supplying the PLO with all the support and aid needed for it to meet its national and international responsibilities.

'ARAFAT MEETS WITH BOUMEDIENE, PDRY PREMIER, SRV ENVOY

JN121454Y Voice of Palestine [Clandestine] in Arabic to the Arab World 1400 GMT 12 Jan 78 JN

[Text] Brother Abu 'Ammar, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee and commander in chief of the forces of the revolution, yesterday met with Algerian President Houari Boumediene and brother 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, prime minister of the PDRY. During these meetings the leaders discussed the necessary measures to bolster and support the resolutions of the Tripoli conference of confrontation and steadfastness which was held in Tripoli, Libya, last month. The meetings also dealt with the latest developments in the situation on both the Arab and international levels and steps which should be taken to tackle these developments, which come during this stage of challenges against the Arab nation. The meeting further discussed the means to promote Algerian-Palestinian relations and PDRY-Palestinian relations.

Our correspondent has learned that President Boumediene briefed brother leader Abu 'Ammar on the contacts with Arab leaders he has made during his tour of ten Arab capitals.

Brother Abu 'Ammar also met with the Vietnamese ambassador in Damascus. Our correspondent learned that the ambassador handed brother Abu 'Ammar a letter from the Vietnamese leadership concerning developments along the Vietnam-Cambodia border. The Palestinian news agency WAFA has learned that brother Abu 'Ammar informed the Vietnamese ambassador of his concern over current developments on the borders between the two friendly countries, Vietnam and Cambodia.

AL-BA'TH CALLS FOR END TO ARAB 'HESITATION'

JN111119Y Damascus Domestic Service in Arabic 0415 GMT 11 Jan 78 JN

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "Enough Hesitation by Arabs," the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: Until a few days ago, certain people have been saying that they are for the Palestinian Arab people's rights and that they are with the Arabs in their struggle to recover their usurped rights. It is clear now that these people have aimed, in their previous stands, at what we are hearing now. They now consider that the Palestinian people's rights rest with the establishment of self-rule in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, with no mention at all of Jerusalem, and with maintenance of a full Israeli military presence and affirmation of the legitimacy of existing Zionist settlements, as well as all future ones which might be set up in accordance with the Israeli plans on the subject.

More than that, certain sources state that those who, until recently, have been the most zealous supporters of the Palestinian people's cause now insist on the settlement of the issue in the way Israel proposes, the United States adopts, and the As-Sadat regime approves. Also, semiconfirmed reports state that these people have pledged to Carter their readiness to protect any such settlement to be implemented in the region in the future. More precisely, they will oppose the Arab fighting forces rejecting the capitulationist solutions and, if necessary, they will confront them, each according to his role.

The Arab forces--which are supposed to have unified their ranks and formed a strong broad front to face all that is happening--have unfortunately, up to this time, not carried out what is required of them.

Arab Syria, which has been calling for the necessity to forget and put aside all marginal differences and to pay attention to what is more important and dangerous, reaffirms that the danger will not be restricted to one party but is aimed at everybody. Even the distant oil wells are not safe from such a danger.

Since the situation is so serious, it is difficult to speculate on its possible results and effects on the future of the Arabs nation. Therefore, we believe that the Arabs have waited long enough. Everyone must realize that the coming danger will not wait for anyone to arrange his own affairs to suit himself.

The prepared plan was originally formulated against all, to keep the Arabs in a whirlpool so they could not adopt any serious and unified stands to face what is happening. The Arabs have hesitated enough. The only way out is by sidestepping minor problems to deal with major ones. In any case, history will have mercy on no one.

TUNISIA

LABOR FEDERATION LEADER EXPLAINS RESIGNATION

LD111558Y Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 Jan 78 LD

[Text] The deliberations of the National Council of the Tunisian General Labor Federation [UGTT] which lasted 3 days, ended last night and issued a general resolution and trade union resolution. The resignation of Habib Achour, secretary general of the federation, from his membership of the Political Bureau and the party's Central Committee was announced at this meeting.

At a press conference held yesterday afternoon at Amilcar Hotel, Habib Achour said that he has sent to President Habib Bourguiba, head of state and head of the party, his letter of resignation from the Political Bureau and from the party's Central Committee, describing this act as an expression of his disagreement with the government in the political, economic and social fields.

It is worth noting that this disagreement and these attitudes are new and sudden. Everyone is aware of the absolute support which the UGTT, until recently, has given to the government's work and its decisions in all fields. This includes the occasion of the signing of the Social Contract in January 1977 and the visits that followed by the secretary general of the federation throughout the republic praising the stands of the government of Mr Hedi Nouira and its achievements and gains, particularly for the weak social [word indistinct], and the recent conference of the Labor Federation, which by its work and documents supported the government's decisions, including the 5-year plan and the Social Contract.

We must not also forget the statement issued by the Political Bureau in November 1977 which contained the approval of all its members, including Habib Achour, for the policy of the party and the government.

It is therefore no secret to any citizen that the reasons given by the author for his resignation were feeble and cannot possibly deceive anyone, and that in fact what lies behind this resignation are other reasons and premeditated intentions which the future will reveal. The people will learn the full truth. At any rate, the base will always have the final and decisive word.

Tunis Assails Unions

LD120826Y Tunis Domestic Service in Arabic 2300 GMT 11 Jan 78 LD

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] With justified bewilderment and concern, Tunisian citizens have for some months now been witnessing the turning of some trade union attitudes in a direction of premeditated opposition to the state and party, of contempt for the supreme and permanent national interests, and of failure to evaluate the interests of the nation's life objectively. These extremist stances rest on two basic platforms: excessive social demands, strikes and disturbances; and attacks on the state and party, the legislative institutions and the national organizations, along with an incitement of hatred among the sons of our nation at a time when they most need cooperation and solidarity within the framework of national unity in order to win the battle of liberation from backwardness and build a better future.

At a time when the Tunisian citizens expect the Tunisian trade union organization to consider realities carefully and with full objectivity and to study developments deeply and impartially so that it might contribute to the rebuilding of a new Tunisia free from negative influences and extreme attitudes, the recent debate, decisions and resolutions of the National Council of the UGTT came as a shock to Tunisian citizens, intensifying their bewilderment and anxiety. The general resolution endorsed the campaign of doubt-casting, irresponsible accusation, waging a class struggle and divesting national unity of its elements of cooperation and solidarity. The trade union resolution contained a serious feature that reflected excessive social demands, going so far as to demand that general responsibility be granted to all workers in all sectors, something which has never happened in any country from the Soviet Union to the United States.

The excesses of these extremist elements took the form of attacks on the state and party and of reckless charges, outrageous assertions and sweeping criticism of the government and national organizations. Some went so far as to accuse the party of having been, since 1956, the year of independence, an extension of the colonial regime and to call openly for rebellion and civil disobedience. This is clear evidence that the excessive social demands, the numerous strikes and the campaign of doubt-casting are no more than a transparent veil to conceal a premeditated determination to overthrow the regime, despite the fact that the regime owes its existence to historical legality, a long heroic struggle and the confidence of the nation with all its vital and sincere forces--a nation which is loyal to its martyrs and leaders who created it from nothing and who liberated it from the tentacles of colonialism.

Compatriots are entitled to ask this question of the authors of these campaigns and accusations: If they really doubt the legality of the constitutional and municipal institutions, why have they been taking part in them? If they consider the party to be an extension of the colonial regime, why do they take part in it and assume responsibilities in its various bodies as they have been doing since 1956?

We would like to believe, on the basis of what we know exists in the Tunisian trade union movement, namely, genuine feelings of patriotism and prudence, that the elements which are clean in thought, mind, tongue and objectives are still numerous in the organization founded by Farhat Hached. When they let reason prevail and view matters from the standpoint of the supreme national interests, they will know how to rectify matters and prevent the labor organization from being swept by the wind of extremism to the left or right. They will also ensure that some responsible trade union leaders will not forget the lessons of the past and fall into the trap toward which they are being pushed by the extremists, the reckless and the seditionists.

No-Strike Decision Welcomed

LD131143Y Tunis L'ACTION in French 6 Jan 78 p 1 LD

[Moncef Chihi article: "The Path Which National Trade Unionism is Taking"]

[Text] The majority of workers in the Department of Agriculture and associated bodies have just adopted a mature and responsible attitude in refusing to answer a strike call which has been and is open to dispute. This behavior proves that the workers are not easily taken in and know to protect their interests. They know when dangerous elements are trying to jeopardize them through practices which clash with trade unionism and it was conceived and upheld by Farhat Hached.

By this lucid act, these workers have made outstanding use of the just and sound path which Hached mapped out for the Tunisian General Federation of Labor and which constitutes an authentically national brand of trade unionism firmly based on the higher interests of the country and not on the ambitions of a handful of individuals.

A large number of trade unionists support this path. Indeed, they are in an overwhelming majority. What is more, they are fully aware of the problems which the country faces and which must be solved in order to insure the greatest degree of social justice at the same time as a continuous growth in production. Moreover, they realize that the party and government are trying to improve their situation as much as available means will allow. Although a positive response has not yet been given to certain working class demands, this does not mean that the government is not trying to find a solution to the problems which these demands pose. We do not challenge the principle of increased salaries or social demands, provided certain criteria are observed and some sort of timetable is followed.

In any event, the behavior of this majority which has come to the fore in trade unions and in most of the enterprises so far affected by strike movements contrasts sharply with an extremist tendency which has chosen the path, means and objectives of chance and has an almost total disregard for the dramatic situations likely to result from the class conflict which it preaches relentlessly. This path runs counter to all Hached's teaching and we all know where it will lead--and it will not lead to prosperity. It is even less likely to bring about the realization of working class aspirations since its aim is to divide the people into opposing classes, todestroy their solidarity, reduce their means and inaugurate a reign of anarchy.

This path is copied from models which have failed in other states, and it is not likely to win serious support in Tunisia because the working class in our country has never been cut off from the people and has long since learned to safeguard its unity and its gains.

L'ACTION Defends Nouira

LD061515Y Tunis L'ACTION in French 28 Dec 77 p 1 LD

[Abdelhay Sghaier article: "Clarity in Politics"]

[Text] Uncertainty in public life is paralyzing. No country can bring itself to accept uncertainty, for the will of the masses and their desire to overcome problems can only be expressed in an atmosphere of clarity.

Is there still any need to point out that clarity is a sine qua non of the practice of democracy and the perpetuation of state institutions? Is it possible to carry on the dialog which is the essence and never center of all democratic life without clarity? We attach a great deal of importance to dialog. It is an integral part of the political traditions which President Bourguiba has established and developed.

It is, therefore, easy to understand how certain people have cultivated uncertainty and doubt as a weapon aimed at shaking the convictions of our citizens and destroying national unity and tunisian solidarity in the battle for development. It is easy to see that their intrigues were merely aimed at gaining credence for the idea of the existence of currents of thought which could divide the members of the government into "hardliners" and "moderates," or "reactionaries" and "progressives," or even "liberals" and "conservatives"--a situation which would favor their plans.

The Machiavellian designs which they tried by grotesque maneuvers to hide behind a smokescreen had the sole aim of creating an atmosphere of paralyzing short-term doubt and suspicion.

These scandalous actions may run counter to the development of the democratic process which the Tunisian people value and for which they have made sacrifices, but they cannot mislead our masses and overseas opinion as to the plans and excessive ambitions entertained by the instigators of the mini-ministerial crisis solved by the head of state. This unhealthy game which prevents clarity from prevailing surely cannot be the work of democrats. Nobody could think otherwise. The Tunisian people have condemned it unambiguously, for it is contrary to their aspirations and interests.

Those who thought they could hold out this trap for public opinion have been defeated. Nobody took them seriously, because public opinion had confidence in Mr Hedi Nouira, who always behaves with honesty, moral rectitude, authority and loyalty, and since 1970 has been preaching clarity and providing the frank and calm conditions in which dialog can take place.

Mr Nouira has given the country a fertile working environment in an atmosphere of consultation and freedom, and, after he had abolished practices based on coercion and disregard for human beings, he has brought about the recovery necessary to restore confidence. Mr Nouira has given the country collective agreements in the framework of the progress contract and was prepared the way for the social pact as a vigorous means of consolidating national solidarity. The government which President Bourguiba placed under his control prefers clarity. It will not abandon this value.

JERUSALEM WILL NOT REACT TO AS-SADAT PROPOSALS IN POST

TA130809Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0800 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[Text] It is reported from the prime minister's office that Israel will not react to the Egyptian proposals published in the press. The reference is to an interview which President as-Sadat gave the paper the Jerusalem POST in which he proposed establishing a joint Israel-Egypt-Jordan-Palestinian committee to work out security arrangements for Judaea and Samaria.

Our correspondent Razi Barkay was told that there was no doubt that any proposal by Egypt brought to the Political Committee would be debated seriously. Our correspondent also reports that the agenda of this committee has still not been formulated and the prime minister's office reports that it is still in the process of being worked out.

EGYPT WISHES CONTINUATION OF MILITARY TALKS

TA122026Y Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Text] Our political correspondent Ron Ben-Yishay learned that, according to reports received in Jerusalem, it has become clear from the military talks in Cairo that despite the tough statements of the Egyptians they are very desirous of continuing the negotiations. The same circles also said that there is readiness in Egypt to reexamine the declared Egyptian positions.

The meeting of the Ministerial Committee for Security and Foreign Affairs, which was meant to be held tomorrow to hear Defense Minister 'Ezer Weizman's report about the talks in Cairo, will not convene since Mr Weizman will return to Israel at a late hour. The ministerial committee will convene at the prime minister's residence on Saturday evening.

AL-AHRAM: SETTLEMENTS CANNOT BE ON POLITICAL COMMITTEE AGENDA

NC120543Y Cairo MENA in Arabic 2342 GMT 12 Jan 78 NC

[Text] Cairo, 12 January--The newspaper AL-AHRAM says in Friday's edition that Egypt has reaffirmed its refusal to list the question of the Israeli settlements on the agenda of the Egyptian-Israeli joint Political Committee. This was contained in Egypt's reply today to the working paper proposed by Israel as an agenda for the work of the Political Committee.

The paper adds that in its reply Egypt explained that the question of the settlements is already on the agenda of the Military Committee, which began its meetings yesterday, and that the Political Committee has nothing to do with it.

WEIZMAN: ATMOSPHERE OF MILITARY TALKS 'BETTER THAN EXPECTED'

TA130624Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[Text] Prime Minister Begin last night said he received a call from Weizman, who said the talks were being conducted in a better atmosphere than expected. Begin was talking to bonds leaders who phoned him from the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York. Begin asked for higher sales to stop the problem of poverty in Israel.

EGYPTIAN OFFICIAL PREVIEWS POLITICAL COMMITTEE TALKS

TA121642Y Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 12 Jan 78 p 9 TA

[Interview with Egyptian Foreign Ministry official Dr Husayn Hassunah by Taqfiq Huri on 11 January in Jerusalem]

[Text] Dr Husayn Hassunah of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, who is staying at the Hilton in Jerusalem, has already had a few meetings with the host Foreign Ministry's legal adviser, Dr Meir Rosenne, "to discuss substantive issues that will be deliberated between the two delegations in the Political Committee" in the capital next week.

The Egyptian proposals to be raised in the committee are in the spirit of the basic Egyptian position that is based on two principles: Israel's withdrawal from territories occupied in 1967 and the recognition of the Palestine people's legitimate rights and its right to self-determination. "The realization of these two principles," Dr Hassunah said last night, "obliges both parties to reach an agreement about mutual security arrangements that would insure full security to both Israel and the Arab countries. When we reach that stage, we shall begin discussing the future peaceful relations that have to be manifested in every sphere."

Which principle will receive priority in Egypt's proposals, I asked.

Replied Hassunah, a relative of 'Abd al-Khaliq Hassunah, former Arab League secretary: Because of the controversy between the parties regarding the order of priorities, this issue will occupy the first part of the discussions in the Political Committee. It may be assumed that after the discussions the two parties will agree which principle will receive precedence in the discussions to follow.

Is any kind of an Egyptian concession possible over the issue of an Israeli civilian presence in Sinai after the withdrawal?

Hassunah: "No Egyptian concession is to be expected on the subject of Israel's withdrawal to the international frontier and on the subject of Egypt's full sovereignty. And, naturally, it is not to be expected that we shall agree to an Israeli military or civilian presence in Sinai."

Dr Hassunah went on to say that the Egyptian delegation was bringing to the negotiating table detailed Egyptian proposals on the issue of security arrangements that have to be made after the Israeli withdrawal. The arrangements will include, according to him, demilitarized areas, a presence of UN forces and the setting up of early warning stations. "Our task is to convince the Israelis that a striving for peace and the intention to continue occupying territories of others constitute a paradox."

Is disappointment being felt in Egypt in view of Israel's intention to flesh out the Sinai settlements?

"No. There is no disappointment in Egypt," answered Hassunah. "There is a consensus in Egypt about the need to continue seeking peace by political means. We are still hoping that the Government of Israel will overcome all the problems and behave in accordance with the spirit of the times."

And what will your position be if the talks in the Political and Military committees reach a stalemate?

"Before thinking of failure, maximum effort should be invested so as not to arrive at such a situation. We shall wait patiently until Israel responds to our legitimate demands."

Even if it should take years?

"Years? Certainly not. A settlement must be reached as soon as possible. One has to exploit the momentum that has been created."

Do the recently published Egyptian reactions, particularly those in AL-AHRAM, indicate a desire to threaten with a war option again?

"The recent publications are in reaction to Israeli leaders' declarations. When the prime minister declares that Israel will not dismantle settlements in Sinai and that, if Egypt insists on that demand, Israel is likely to demand territorial chances on the international border, we feel an urge to react. We are not coming to the negotiations from a position of weakness and we can achieve our objective by peaceful means as well as on a warpath."

DAYAN COMMENTS ON RESULTS OF ITALIAN VISIT

TA130708Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0505 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[From the Morning Newsreel]

[Text] Moshe Dayan said, on his return from Italy early this morning, that he came away from his talk with the Pope satisfied. The pope did not express any concrete concern about supervision or any sort of control over the holy places in Israel. The foreign minister also said that the European countries supported the countries holding negotiations for peace more than they supported the rejectionist countries bloc.

About the Italian Government's position, Moshe Dayan said: [begin recording]

[Dayan] I think that there are differences of opinion between us and the top ranks of the Italian Government as to the Palestinian issue. It was not expressed in concrete criticism that they think that we should today behave any differently from how we are behaving, but their attitude toward the PLO and their attitude toward the Palestinians' right to self-determination is not identical with our approach. They have a more pro-Palestinian position than that of the State of Israel. I am speaking about the Palestinian Arabs, of course. [end recording]

Meetings in Rome, Vatican

For Italian reportage on Dayan's visit to Italy and the Vatican, see the Italy & Vatican section of the 9 January Western Europe DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

RADIO MONITOR DENIES SOVIET ARMS AIRLIFT TO REJECTIONISTS

TA130623Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in English 0500 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[Text] Israel radio monitor Mikha'el Gurdus said there is no truth to reports in American and British newspapers about a Soviet airlift of arms to the Arab rejectionist states. He said two or three Soviet transport planes are landing daily in Ethiopia, but not in the Middle East. However, it should not be ruled out that the rejectionist states are receiving stepped-up Soviet arms supplies by sea.

BEGIN TELLS GOLAN SETTLERS TO CONTINUE WORK

TA130710Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 0700 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[Text] The prime minister told the members of the committee of settlements in the Golan Heights that the development work in the settlements in the area will continue as planned.

The committee members reported to our correspondents that they returned from the meeting with Mr Begin feeling encouraged. They also requested that Israeli law be applied in the Golan Heights, but the prime minister gave them no reply to this, they said.

Also taking part in the meeting was Agriculture Minister Ari'el Sharon.

BEGIN PLEDGES CONTINUED STRUGGLE FOR SOVIET JEWRY

TA121432Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1400 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Text] The prime minister received Sylva Zalmanson in his office today. She handed him a petition calling for the release of the prisoners of Zion, including her husband Eduard Kuznetsov, who is on a hunger strike in a Soviet prison. Mr Begin made it clear to Mrs Zalmanson that the government is persisting in its efforts to secure the release of the prisoners of Zion in the Soviet Union and for their right to immigrate to Israel.

REPORTS OF SHARON INITIATIVE ON SINAI DENIED

TA131030Y Jerusalem Domestic Service in Hebrew 1000 GMT 13 Jan 78 TA

[Text] It is reported from the prime minister's office that there is no foundation for reports to the effect that the agriculture minister is acting on his own initiative in the Sinai approaches or in any other area. Minister Sharon, the announcement says, is carrying out the cabinet's decisions.

ELAT POLICE, IDF OFFICERS VISIT 'AQABA

TA121521Y Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew 12 Jan 78 p 6 TA

[By Eli Danon]

[Text] Yesterday Jordanian soliders and policemen received warmly the Elat police commander, Superintendent Moshe Haviv, and IDF officers who went to 'Aqaba to retrieve a rowboat that had drifted there 2 weeks ago with two French tourists.

The tourists were returned to Israel via the Allenby Bridge a few days ago.

GUARD PATROL ON LEBANESE BORDER DRAWS FIRE

TA122053Y Jerusalem Domestic Television Service in Hebrew 1900 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Excerpt] Mortar and light arms fire was directed from Lebanese territory toward a border guard patrol this morning. The patrol was moving on the border road west of Kibbutz Yiftah. There were no casualties or damage.

MAURITANIAN MINISTER MEETS SHAH; KHALATBARI TO MAKE VISIT

TA121805Y Paris AFP in English 1715 GMT 12 Jan 78 TA

[Text] Teheran, Jan 12 (AFP)--Mauritanian Foreign Minister Hamdi Ould Mouknass today conferred with the shah, who expressed Iran's "sympathy" for the case of Nouakchott and Rabat in the Western Sahara dispute with the Algerian-backed Saharan liberation movement POLISARIO Front.

Mr. Mouknass delivered a message from President Moktar Ould Daddah to the shah and briefed him on the situation in northwestern Africa.

Mauritanian sources said after the talks that they had no doubt that Iran backed Morocco and Mauritania--which partitioned the former Spanish Sahara--in their war with the POLISARIO.

They said that President Ould Daddah's message dealt with the situation in northwestern Africa and with bilateral relations and that the shah had conveyed a verbal answer to be relayed by Mr Mouknass.

The sources did not deny that the Mauritanian message contained a request of Iranian aid within the framework of bilateral cooperation.

Meanwhile, Foreign Minister Khalatbari accepted an invitation from Mr Mouknass to visit Nouakchott and sources said that he would probably make the visit soon after a possible visit to Rabat next spring.

Mr Mouknass told AFP that the shah wanted Morocco, Algeria and Mauritania to settle their problems peacefully so as to concentrate entirely on their domestic development and the welfare of their peoples.

Africa needs stability and not useless tensions, Mr Mouknass also quoted the shah as saying.

The Mauritanian minister praised Morocco's "permanent, discreet, efficient and important assistance," (?its) "temporary and limited aid."

The [minister] said that the POLISARIO was a "myth" and a creation of Algeria aimed at expanding Algiers' "hegemony" over the northwest African region, gaining access to the Atlantic and destabilizing the Spanish Canary Islands.

Mr Mouknass, who arrived here on Jan 7, was due to return home tomorrow.

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